

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
INVENTORY - NOMINATION FORM

(Type all entries - complete applicable sections)

VLR: 12-2-69
NRHP: 4-17-70 127-42

STATE: Virginia	
COUNTY: Richmond (in cit.)	
FOR NPS USE ONLY	
ENTRY NUMBER	DATE

1. NAME

COMMON:
Hancock-Wirt-Caskie House

AND/OR HISTORIC:
Hancock-Wirt-Caskie House

2. LOCATION

STREET AND NUMBER:
2 N. Fifth Street

CITY OR TOWN:
Richmond

STATE: Virginia	CODE: 45	COUNTY: (in cit.)	CODE: 760
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3. CLASSIFICATION

CATEGORY (Check One)	OWNERSHIP	STATUS	ACCESSIBLE TO THE PUBLIC
<input type="checkbox"/> District <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Building <input type="checkbox"/> Site <input type="checkbox"/> Structure <input type="checkbox"/> Object	<input type="checkbox"/> Public <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Private <input type="checkbox"/> Both	Public Acquisition: <input type="checkbox"/> In Process <input type="checkbox"/> Being Considered	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Occupied <input type="checkbox"/> Unoccupied <input type="checkbox"/> Preservation work in progress
PRESENT USE (Check One or More as Appropriate)			
<input type="checkbox"/> Agricultural <input type="checkbox"/> Commercial <input type="checkbox"/> Educational <input type="checkbox"/> Entertainment	<input type="checkbox"/> Government <input type="checkbox"/> Industrial <input type="checkbox"/> Military <input type="checkbox"/> Museum	<input type="checkbox"/> Park <input type="checkbox"/> Private Residence <input type="checkbox"/> Religious <input type="checkbox"/> Scientific	<input type="checkbox"/> Transportation <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Other (Specify) <u>Charitable</u>
			<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Comments <u>Red Cross</u>

4. OWNER OF PROPERTY

OWNER'S NAME:
Richmond Chapter, American Red Cross

STREET AND NUMBER:
2 N. Fifth Street

CITY OR TOWN:
Richmond

STATE: Virginia	CODE: 45
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5. LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION

COURTHOUSE, REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.:
Richmond City Hall

STREET AND NUMBER:
Broad and Tenth Streets

CITY OR TOWN:
Richmond

STATE: Virginia	CODE: 45
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6. REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

TITLE OF SURVEY:
Historic American Buildings Survey

DATE OF SURVEY: 1936 Federal State County Local

DEPOSITORY FOR SURVEY RECORDS:
Library of Congress

STREET AND NUMBER:

CITY OR TOWN:
Washington

STATE: District of Columbia	CODE: 08
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SEE INSTRUCTIONS

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7. DESCRIPTION

CONDITION	(Check One)					
	<input type="checkbox"/> Excellent	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Good	<input type="checkbox"/> Fair	<input type="checkbox"/> Deteriorated	<input type="checkbox"/> Ruins	<input type="checkbox"/> Unexposed
	(Check One)			(Check One)		
	<input type="checkbox"/> Altered	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Unaltered	<input type="checkbox"/> Moved	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Original Site		

DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (if known) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

The Hancock-Wirt-Caskie House is a two-story, hipped roof structure constructed of brick laid in Flemish bond with English bond below the watertable. The three bays on either side of the entrance are formed into octagonal-ended or three-sectioned bow front projections with a wooden, two-level porch arcade screening the central space. The porch floor and entrance steps are in marble, and the windows have scored stone sills. Other stylistic accents are the brick belt course between the floors and the deep eaves with long, narrow brackets.

The central hall plan features the octagonal room on the south with a rectangular room behind and a larger single room across the hall. The small stair hall at the rear of the central hall is defined by a large, rectangular opening. Although the original mantels have been replaced by marble ones which date from the mid-nineteenth century, most wood and plaster trim remains. Especially fine is that in the south octagonal room which features a frieze and cornice detailing around the ceiling in geometrical patterns; the doorway to the hall uses flower swags and urns to decorate the pilasters, frieze and cornice. The hallway has architrave door framings with a frieze above decorated in an octagon pattern. Another interesting feature is the arch on the second level incorporating sliding doors which separates the two rooms on the north side of the hall. Frame and brick additions have been made to the rear, and several rooms on both floors have closet space added.

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

SIGNIFICANCE

PERIOD (Check One or More as Appropriate)

- | | | | |
|--|---------------------------------------|--|---------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Pre-Columbian | <input type="checkbox"/> 16th Century | <input type="checkbox"/> 18th Century | <input type="checkbox"/> 20th Century |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 15th Century | <input type="checkbox"/> 17th Century | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 19th Century | |

SPECIFIC DATE(S) (If Applicable and Known)

AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE (Check One or More as Appropriate)

- | | | | |
|---|---|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Aboriginal | <input type="checkbox"/> Education | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Political | <input type="checkbox"/> Urban Planning |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Prehistoric | <input type="checkbox"/> Engineering | <input type="checkbox"/> Religion/Philosophy | <input type="checkbox"/> Other (Specify) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Historic | <input type="checkbox"/> Industry | <input type="checkbox"/> Science | _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Agriculture | <input type="checkbox"/> Invention | <input type="checkbox"/> Sculpture | _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Architecture | <input type="checkbox"/> Landscape Architecture | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Social/Humanitarian | _____ |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Art | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Literature | <input type="checkbox"/> Theater | _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Commerce | <input type="checkbox"/> Military | <input type="checkbox"/> Transportation | _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Communications | <input type="checkbox"/> Music | | _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Conservation | | | _____ |

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

The Hancock-Wirt-Caskie House was built in 1808-09 by Michael Hancock who sold the property in 1814. In 1816 William Wirt (1772-1834) purchased the house and lived there until 1818 when he moved to Washington as Attorney General of the United States under James Monroe. While living in the Hancock-Wirt-Caskie House, he completed his famous Life of Patrick Henry, one of the first great biographies in American literature. Wirt was a distinguished public figure of the times, being noted both for his legal prowess as well as his success as an author. Besides his success as the first biographer of Patrick Henry, Wirt wrote the Letters of the British Spy, as well as other articles for the newspapers. He also served in the House of Delegates and as Attorney General of Virginia before being appointed Attorney General of the United States.

Upon moving to Washington, Wirt rented his house for a few months and then sold it to Benjamin Tate, former Mayor of Richmond. At his death in 1821, Tate left the property to his son, Joseph Tate, who served as Mayor of Richmond from 1826 until his death in 1839. In 1846 the heirs of Joseph Tate sold the property which eventually passed into the hands of William Palmer who ran a successful agricultural implement store. The house later passed into the hands of his daughter, Emma Palmer Caskie (Mrs. James Caskie) who lived there until her death in 1941. The house now serves as the headquarters of the Richmond Chapter of the American Red Cross.

The Hancock-Wirt-Caskie House is a sophisticated example of the Federalist style and exhibits the Latrobian characteristics of low roof pitch, deep eaves with narrow brackets, and the use of geometric shapes in the facade plan, interior room arrangement, and detailing. It bears a strong relationship to Point of Honor in Lynchburg in these characteristics and, along with the Wickham-Valentine House, and to a lesser extent the Ann Carrington House on Church Hill, is one of the three remaining Richmond houses which clearly shows the breakup of the Georgian formality into the more personal Federalist refinement. Even more significant is the fact that the Hancock-Wirt-Caskie House is the only survivor in Richmond of the three-sectioned bay motif as a Federalist theme, a motif, as described in 1850, that "seems to have affected a large number of the homes of the city of any great age, giving them and it a singular appearance."

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

9. MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

Scott, Mary Wingfield, Houses of Old Richmond (Richmond, 1941), pp. 84-88.

10. GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

LATITUDE AND LONGITUDE COORDINATES DEFINING A RECTANGLE LOCATING THE PROPERTY			O R	LATITUDE AND LONGITUDE COORDINATES DEFINING THE CENTER POINT OF A PROPERTY OF LESS THAN TEN ACRES		
CORNER	LATITUDE	LONGITUDE		LATITUDE	LONGITUDE	
	Degrees Minutes Seconds	Degrees Minutes Seconds		Degrees Minutes Seconds	Degrees Minutes Seconds	
NW	° ' "	° ' "		37 ° 32 ' 27 "	77 ° 26 ' 24 "	
NE	° ' "	° ' "				
SE	° ' "	° ' "				
SW	° ' "	° ' "				

APPROXIMATE ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY: $\frac{1}{2}$ acre

LIST ALL STATES AND COUNTIES FOR PROPERTIES OVERLAPPING STATE OR COUNTY BOUNDARIES

STATE:	CODE	COUNTY	CODE

11. FORM PREPARED BY

NAME AND TITLE:
Staff, Virginia Historic Landmarks Commission, James W. Moody, Jr., Director

ORGANIZATION: **Virginia Historic Landmarks Commission** DATE: **November 19, 1969**

STREET AND NUMBER:
Room 1116, Ninth Street State Office Building

CITY OR TOWN: **Richmond** STATE: **Virginia** CODE: **45**

12. STATE LIAISON OFFICER CERTIFICATION NATIONAL REGISTER VERIFICATION

<p>As the designated State Liaison Officer for the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (Public Law 89-665), I hereby nominate this property for inclusion in the National Register and certify that it has been evaluated according to the criteria and procedures set forth by the National Park Service. The recommended level of significance of this nomination is:</p> <p>National <input type="checkbox"/> State <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Local <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>Name _____</p> <p>Dr. Edward P. Alexander, Chairman Title Virginia Historic Landmarks Commission</p> <p>Date _____</p>	<p>I hereby certify that this property is included in the National Register.</p> <p>_____ Chief, Office of Archeology and Historic Preservation</p> <p>Date _____</p> <p>ATTEST:</p> <p>_____ Keeper of The National Register</p> <p>Date _____</p>
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SEE INSTRUCTIONS



U.S.G.S. 7 1/2' quadrangle (Scale: 1:24000)
 Richmond, Va. (1964)

Hancock-Wirt-Caskie House
 Latitude 37° 32' 27"
 Longitude 77° 26' 24"

